



**TRAIL
LIFE
USA**

Environmental Stewardship

Name _____

Mankind's continual growth and placement of man-made buildings, roads, and infrastructure serves to increase human life expectancy and quality of life. However, mankind's activities can also have detrimental impacts on the world environment by adding buildings and pavement, altering drainage patterns, drying up wetlands, and emitting pollution into the air and water. As part of the natural created environment, mankind has both the privilege and responsibility of stewardship over the environment and to care for humans, especially the least among us, because they are all made in the image of God. This Trail Badge introduces you to the activities of environmental stewardship including recycling, reuse, clean-up, and choosing wise practices.

Do all of the following requirements (1-5)

- ____1. Participate in your community-recycling program or collect at least three categories of recyclable waste for two weeks and deliver it to a recycling center. Then for the five categories of recyclable waste: Paper, Aluminum, Metals, Plastics, and Glass, make a chart showing:
 - ____a. The ways this waste product harms the environment when dumped in a landfill, dumped in the ocean, or incinerated
 - ____b. The ability to recycle this category of waste multiple times (i.e. can it be recycled forever or does the byproduct quality diminish?)
 - ____c. The demand for each category in the recycling marketplace.
- ____2. Keep a log of family purchases for two weeks – categorize each purchase (i.e. trip to food store) as **“Critical/Necessary”** or **“Non-Critical/Desired Items”**. Analyze the purchases and discuss with your family how having too much stuff impacts the family, community (waste production), and environment. Develop a plan to identify unused/undesired excess stuff in your home and then dispose of these items by repurposing, donating, selling, recycling, etc.
- ____3. List at least five different types of pollution and do the following:
 - ____a. Explain how each type of pollution affects animals and their habitats.
 - ____b. List actions you can do to limit the impact of each type of pollution.



- _____4. Organize a neighborhood clean up project, such as cleaning a riverbank, beach, park, etc.
- _____5. Research which of the following are better for our environment. Make a chart showing the positive and negative effects of each item or practice, or hold a debate about the positive and negative effects of the above items and practices. Some answers may surprise you.
- Carbon Footprint of Hybrid electric vehicles vs. regular vehicles
 - Total impact of disposable diapers vs. cloth diapers with a diaper service
 - Bulk packaging of food (quart/gallon or larger) vs. individual serving boxes/cans/bottles/etc.
 - High density apartment buildings with community parks/courts/pools vs. tracts of single family homes with individual backyards and play areas
 - Flexibility of individual cars versus the required infrastructure for mass transit

Do three of the following optional requirements from any topic (6-13)

- _____6. Make a chart showing the benefits and downsides to hybrid vehicles as compared to traditional vehicles. Include categories for purchase cost, availability, maintenance costs, fuel costs per mile, amount of pollution created, type of pollution created, cost to repair in the event of a crash, safety, disposal of retired vehicle.
- _____7. Pick an environmental issue and write a letter to your representative or senator to share your concerns and proposed solutions. Send the letter and see if you get a reply.
- _____8. Create a survey on how people in your community, Troop, or family care for the environment. Ask at least ten youth and ten adults to participate. Compile your findings and share your conclusions with the people you surveyed.
- _____9. Make a chart that shows whether recycling is available for each item and if so, how it is accomplished (where to go, who to call, etc.): Christmas trees, ink cartridges, computers, televisions, cell phones and rechargeable batteries. Organize a collection drive for your Troop, your school and/or your neighbors.

- ____10. Research and create a list of agencies that provide recycling programs for eyeglasses, gently used clothing, wheelchairs, and other medical equipment (i.e., canes, crutches, walkers, and assistance supplies). Designate local collections vs. those requiring shipping. Organize a collection in your area, or make a presentation to a group promoting their participation in drop off programs.
- ____11. Visit your local grocery store list as many organic products as you can find. Create a report to include your list of organic products and each of the following:
- ____a. Define what it means for a food product to be labeled "certified organic."
 - ____b. List some basic principles of organic farming.
 - ____c. List the benefits and disadvantages of organic farming.
- ____12. Create a short report including each of the following:
- ____a. Define green design and explain how green design differs from traditional design.
 - ____b. Describe the impact of construction on the surrounding ecosystem.
 - ____c. Explain LEED certification and how sustainable design seeks to minimize the impact of construction on the surrounding ecosystem.
 - ____d. Conclude your report by describing a visit to a LEED certified building, or a virtual tour of such a building. List the green design decisions you find.
- ____13. Many household hazardous materials need special handling to be certain that their chemicals do not enter the natural world and contaminate soils or water sources. List as many common household hazardous waste products (or products containing dangerous components) as possible and explain how your community handles these items to protect the environment. Clear out unneeded household hazardous waste and take it to a collection center.

Trail Badge Mentor Signature

Date

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